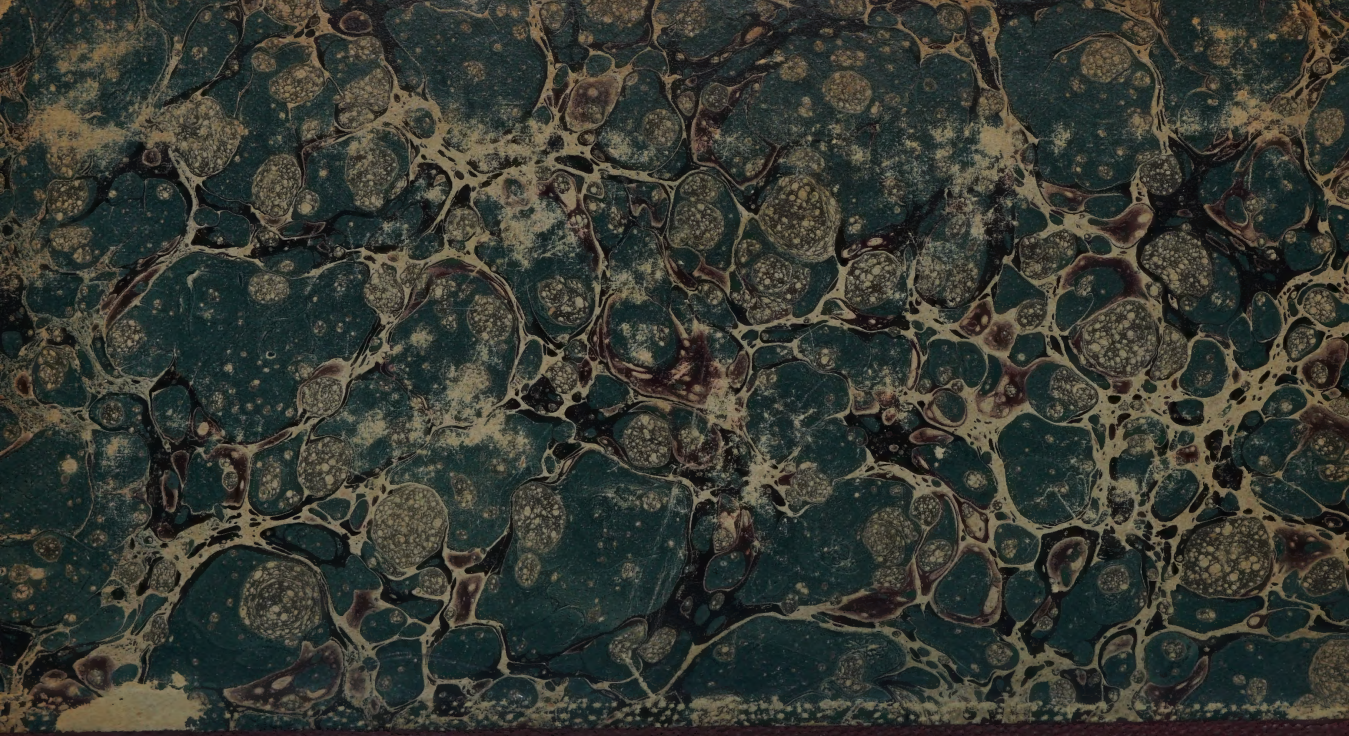

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Leeds Anti-slavery Series. No. 32.

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE BILL, AND ITS EFFECTS.

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SLAVE-OWNER SHOOTING A FUGITIVE SLAVE.

In the autumn of 1850, the American Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Bill. Previously to the passing of that measure, the slave who could manage to escape from the Southern States found shelter and refuge in the North. There he was safe. Public opinion guarded him. Now the case is altered. The slave may be tracked, and claimed, and sent back to slavery. The bill denies the privilege of a trial by jury. By the law of the United States, a trial by jury is granted in all cases where the value in controversy exceeds twenty dollars. By the slave law this privilege is denied. "A human being," says Judge Jay, in commenting upon this law, "is stripped of every right, and reduced to the condition of a vendible beast of burden, with less ceremony and more celerity than one neighbour can recover of another the value of a pig in any court of justice."

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William Lloyd Garrison
July 8, 1899.

The American Constitution declares that no person shall be deprived of life or property, without due process of law. Also, it provides, that in criminal prosecutions the accused shall enjoy a speedy and public trial by jury, and be confronted with the witnesses against him. The Fugitive Slave Bill sets aside these provisions, it suspends the Habeas Corpus Act. It makes an *ex parte* judgment of a court in one state conclusive against the alleged fugitive in the state where arrested; and not satisfied with this, no appeal from the decision of the commissioner or court is allowed. Besides this, as was said by the Hon. Horace Mann, the proofs which the law provides for, and declares *conclusive*, are abhorrent to reason, to common sense, and to the common law. It provides that evidence taken in a southern state, at any time or place which a claimant may select, without any notice or the possibility of knowledge on the part of the person to be robbed and enslaved by it, may be clandestinely carried or sent to any place where it is to be used, and there sprung upon its victim, as a wild beast springs from its jungle upon the passer-by; and it provides that this evidence, thus surreptitiously taken and used, shall be *conclusive* proof of the fact of slavery and of escape from slavery. It does not submit the sufficiency of the evidence to the judgment of the tribunal, but it arbitrarily makes it conclusive, whether sufficient or not. It abolishes the common law distinction between competency and credibility.

The cruel fruits of this law have been such as might be expected to grow on so wicked a stock. *The first man sent into slavery under it, Adam Gibson, was a free man.* When the claimant's agent brought Gibson to him, he refused to receive him, for he knew that all his household and neighbours would know that Gibson had never been his slave; and so, after this free man had been seized and sentenced as a slave, and dragged forcibly away from home to Maryland, as a slave, he was set adrift, and left to find his way back as best he could. Of the first *eight* persons doomed to slavery under this law, *four were free men.* In the case of Daniel, who was tried before Mr. Commissioner Smith, at Buffalo, the slave-claimant never carried a single witness before the court that made the record of slavery and escape. In another case, in Philadelphia, Mr. Commissioner Ingraham decided some points directly against law

and authority; and when a decision of a judge of the United States Court was produced against him, he coolly said he differed from the Judge, made out the certificate, pocketed the ten dollars, and sent a human being to bondage. And yet, with all these abominations, we find the Democratic Convention, which met at Baltimore last year, resolved to—"Abide by, and adhere to, a faithful execution of the Act known as the compromise measures settled by the last Congress—the Act for reclaiming from fugitive slaves service or labour, included." And further, that they—"Will resist all attempts at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question, under whatever shape or colour the attempt may be made."

Nor were the Democrats alone; the Whigs at the same place agreed to a resolution almost equally infamous.

But we give an outline of the Bill. From that it will appear how it tramples on human rights, how it arms the slave-owner with terrible and irresponsible power, and deprives the slave of all chance of escape:—

"Marshals and deputies are required to execute all warrants and precepts, or other process, for the arrest and detention of fugitives, under penalty of a fine of 1000 dollars for the use of the claimant of such fugitive; and in case of the escape of such fugitive from the custody of a marshal, whether with or without his knowledge and connivance, the said marshal is to be liable to a prosecution for the full value of the said fugitive.

"Any person who shall knowingly hinder the arrest of a fugitive, or attempt to rescue him after arrest, or assist such fugitive, directly or indirectly, to escape, or harbour or conceal him, after notice or knowledge of the fact that he was a fugitive, shall be liable to a fine of 1000 dollars, and six months' imprisonment, by conviction before the proper district or territorial courts, and to a suit for damages of 1000 dollars for each fugitive lost to his owner by said obstruction or rescue, the same to be recovered by action of debt in any of the courts aforesaid."

Such are the provisions of the bill. Yet actually infamous as they are, President Fillmore, in the annual presidential message, could thus speak respecting it:—

"It is deeply to be regretted that, in several instances, officers of the Government, in attempting to execute the law for the

return of fugitives from labour, have been openly resisted, and their efforts frustrated and defeated by lawless and violent mobs; that in one case such resistance resulted in the death of an estimable citizen, and in others serious injury ensued to those officers and to individuals who were using their endeavours to sustain the laws. Prosecutions have been instituted against the alleged offenders, so far as they could be identified, and are still pending. I have regarded it as my duty, in these cases, to give all aid legally in my power to the enforcement of the laws, and I shall continue to do so, wherever and whenever their execution may be resisted."

After this we cannot be surprised to find ministers of religion sanctioning the Fugitive Slave Bill.

It is supposed there are 50,000 fugitive slaves in the various free states of the Union. It is easy to imagine the terror which the passing of such a measure created. How families were broken up—churches disorganized—joy turned into mourning, and laughter into tears. We propose to illustrate the workings of this law. We have tales of misery enough to fill a volume—but we make a few selections. We will begin with—

THE BREAKING UP OF A CHURCH.

The Rev. James Abbot, whose writings have made him popular on both sides of the Atlantic, says:—"In one of the cities of New England, there was a small Baptist church of coloured people. It consisted of 120 members. Of these, 60 had escaped from Southern bondage, and were consequently on the list of the proscribed by the Fugitive Slave Law. The old law had become a dead letter. Unconscious of danger, they were pursuing, industriously and cheerfully, their several avocations, when this dreadful edict was announced. The panic was terrible. Fathers were in danger of being torn from their wives and children. Mothers were liable, at any moment, to be hurried away from their families. As it is the law of slavery, that the child is to follow the womb which bore it, the children of these mothers, born of free fathers, baptized in free churches, and educated in free schools, were liable at any time to be manacled and sold to Southern taskmasters. In consternation

the little church met, and with prayers and tears implored the aid of God.

"The slave-hunter was immediately after them. Writs were out for their arrest. They trembled by day and by night. They dared not appear in the street. They dared not enter the shops. They dared not go forth to labour. They hid in garrets and cellars. Affectionate daughters conveyed food to the father, whom the slave-hunter, like a bloodhound, was tracking out. The church, poor and feeble as it was, raised 500 dollars to aid their brethren in their helplessness and terror. The alternative before the victims was terrible. They must either be dragged back into slavery; or, abandoning their families, exile themselves alone, in poverty and friendlessness, to Canada; or, selling out, at any sacrifice, all their little concerns, trudge their weary way, with their wives and their little ones, to the cold north, where there was no home to receive them, no friends to greet them, and where, perhaps, starvation was to be their lot. But any doom was preferable to the doom of slavery."

A SCENE IN BOSTON.

The following sketch exhibits the misery the Fugitive Slave Law produces by the disruption of social ties, and the annihilation of the domestic hearth:—

"A coloured girl, eighteen years of age, a few years ago escaped from slavery at the South. Through scenes of adventure and peril, almost more strange than fiction can create, she found her way to Boston. She obtained employment, secured friends, and became a consistent member of a Methodist church. She became interested in a very worthy young man of her own complexion, who was a member of the same church. They were soon married. Their home, though humble, was the abode of piety and contentment. Industrious, temperate, and frugal, all their wants were supplied. Seven years passed away. They had two little boys, one six and the other four years of age. These children, the sons of a free father, but of a mother who had been a slave, by the laws of our Southern states, were doomed to their mother's fate. These Boston boys, born beneath the shadow of Fanueil Hall, the sons of a free citizen of Boston, and educated in the Boston free schools, were, by the compromises of the Constitution, admitted to be slaves, the

property of a South Carolinian planter. The Boston father had no right to his own sons. The law, however, had long been considered a dead letter. The Christian mother, as she morning and evening bowed with her children in prayer, felt that they were safe from the slave-hunter, surrounded as they were by the churches, the schools, and the free institutions of Massachusetts; but no—the Fugitive Slave Law was enacted, and the hopes of the slave-owners revived. A young, healthy, energetic mother, with two fine boys, was a rich prize. The poor woman was panic-struck. She was afraid to go out of doors, lest some from the South should see her. One day she recognised a man prowling, whom she knew came from the place from which she had fled. She was hid in a garret. Immediately after, the officer came with a writ for her arrest. It was a dark and stormy day. The rain, freezing as it fell, swept in floods through the streets of Boston. Night came, cold, black, and tempestuous. At midnight her friends took her in a hack, and conveyed her, with her children, to the house of her pastor. A prayer-meeting had been appointed there, at that hour, in behalf of their suffering sister. A small group of stricken hearts were there assembled. They knelt in prayer. The poor mother, thus hunted from her home, her husband far away, sobbed, in the bitterness of her anguish, as though her heart would break. Her little children, trembling before a doom, the enormity of which they were incapable of appreciating, cried loudly and uncontrollably. The humble minister caught the contagion. His voice became inarticulate through emotion. Bowing his head he ceased to pray, and yielded himself to the sobbings of sympathy and grief. After an hour of weeping, for the voice of prayer had passed away into the sublimity of unutterable anguish, they took this Christian mother and her children in a hack, and conveyed them to one of the Cunard steamers, which fortunately was to sail for Halifax the next day. They took them in the gloom of midnight, through the tempest-swept streets, lest the slave-hunter should meet them. Her brethren and sisters of the church raised a little money from their scanty means to pay her passage, and to save her, for a few days, from starving, after her first arrival in the cold land of strangers. Her husband soon returned to Boston, to find his home desolate, his wife and his children exiles in a foreign land.''

RACHEL PARKER'S CASE.

Rachel Parker, a coloured woman, was recently torn away from her home in West Nottingham, Pennsylvania, as the alleged chattel of a Mr. Schoolfield, a lottery dealer, of Baltimore. J. C. Miller, with whom the woman had been residing, followed the slave-taker and his victim in hot pursuit, accompanied by several other residents in the township. M'Creary, the slave-taker, was arrested on the charge of kidnapping. The evidence of Mr. Miller went to prove that he had known the girl from her earliest infancy, and that she was not a slave.

This latter most important and seemingly conclusive testimony the Justice was not willing to receive as satisfactory, and accordingly continued the case. The woman was committed to the city prison, and Miller and M'Creary held for appearance in the sum of 300 dollars! The parties immediately took the Philadelphia cars for their homes, the friends of the woman entering the Havre de Grace station, M'Creary for Elkton. Miller was missing. His travelling companions returned to Stemmer's Run, a watering place about eleven miles from the city, where it was ascertained Miller was seen to leave the cars. There they inquired and searched in vain, with the worst apprehensions as to his possible fate. A night of suspense passed away, without tidings from the missed one. Next morning, while some workmen, in the neighbourhood of Stemmer's Run, were going to their work, they were startled by the appalling sight of the stiffened body of poor Miller, suspended to a sapling, with a handkerchief fastened to the tree, and another round his neck, the latter of which was recognised as his own. Efforts at resuscitation were made, but in vain. An inquest was held, and a verdict of "Death by *Suicide*" (?) was made up. A *post mortem* examination ended in the discovery of arsenic in the stomach of the deceased, and the appearance of the wrists plainly showed that they had been handcuffed.

THE CASE OF HENRY LONG.

Henry Long was a fugitive from slavery. He had escaped to New York, where he was leading an industrious life, when he was seen by his master's brother-in-law, and claimed. The judge ordered him to be given up, hardly considering worth his

notice the point strongly urged by the defence, that the claimant was under obligation to produce the recent existence of his title to the slave, having shown that such exists. A Richmond paper contained an advertisement of his sale, and the sequel is thus told by a Richmond correspondent of the *Evening Post :*

"It was announced, in the daily papers of yesterday, that Henry Long would be sold this morning, at ten o'clock, at an auction mart near the City Hotel. At that hour the people began to assemble. A few minutes after ten, Henry Long was brought into the auction-room, and seated near two women having infant children—two boys about ten years of age, and two smaller children—all to be sold.

" Long maintained, evidently, a forced smile, and was much agitated. It was only when spoken to that he appeared relieved. There were many soon gathered about him, together with myself, who put various questions to him. I shall detail the conversation in a categorical form, as the truest and shortest mode of conveying all that is necessary in regard to such speculations as have been made about him. His manner, throughout, was modest and civil, and his replies to questions, which were very much the same, repeated over to him by the different parties coming to see him, were sensible. There was no disposition to use taunting language to him. On the contrary, soft and persuasive language was adopted, such as the slave-dealers use to make them believe they are going to glory.

" Long, are you glad to get back to Virginia ? They say you played the fiddle ! Didn't you sing or play ' Carry me back to old Virginny ?' Have you got a wife ? She is a white woman, said some one, isn't she, Long ? Long, said one man, in a meek and beneficent tone, were the abolitionists good to you ? why didn't they come to you when you was sick, and take care of you ? Now, Long, hadn't you rather be back here, a slave in Virginia, than be free in New York, where they don't care anything about you, you know; now, do they ?

" Such is, literally, the conversation, as far as it goes, with Long.

" After being thus, with others, participating in the conversation with Long, until about half-past ten o'clock, when probably two hundred persons had collected within the room and about the doors, the auctioneer called out, ' Whoever is going to buy

niggers will come down to the other office.' A large number followed on to several doors beyond, where it was understood that the sale of Long would not take place until that was over.

"I returned to where Long was awaiting *his* execution. By that time, about eleven o'clock, a number of the members of the Convention and of the Legislature congregated about, and hundreds were coming and going, thus contributing to a large number permanently there. All continued in that manner until after twelve, when the sale was finished at the corner, and another announcement was made at the door, that another sale would take place across the way, where there were about twenty more small boys and girls. That sale occupied until two o'clock.

"From twelve to one o'clock, the President of the Senate stood close by the side of the auctioneer, whilst many of the members of each of the bodies of the Legislature, *which was then in session*—as well as of the Convention, *which was also in session*—were scattered about, waiting the demonstration. Many left between ten and twelve; others arriving to keep up the pressing crowd within. All passed on quietly, with no *noisy* expressions—some saying 'the damned nigger ought to be strung up;' another, that he was not to be blamed for trying to get away, if he could; another, that very likely some abolitionist was then watching their movements.

"Amongst the crowd was one young man, who, from his dress and expressions, appeared as if he might have suddenly come into possession of some property, which he was not accustomed to, and had, in consequence, become suddenly elevated in his own estimation. He swaggered about, to the merriment and approving smiles of a few, but met with no encouragement from the mass, swearing that he was about to buy the 'nigger,' so that he could give him thirteen every morning before breakfast; he would fix him, he would lay it on him, whilst flourishing his cane to show how he would do it.

"About two o'clock the auctioneer came in, and Henry Long was immediately placed on the stand. The auctioneer, turning to him, and taking his hat off, asked him, in a low tone, about his health, strength, soundness, &c., to all of which questions Henry responded favourably.

"The auctioneer then said, 'There is one condition about

this sale. Bonds are to be given by the purchaser that this man shall be carried south, and that he shall be sold and kept south;' then clenching his hand, with a very energetic gesture, and in emphatic language, declared that before Long left his possession he would see that the terms were fully complied with, and he would know his man well, before he gave Long up or received the money. That drew forth a round of applause.

"'The auctioneer continued—'This man is in good health and sound mind. (Doubtful if he is, on the slavery question). I need not give you his history, that is known; and now, how much shall I have bid?'—Starting the bid himself, he said, 'I have only 700 dollars bid. Will nobody bid more?'" I'll give twenty-five dollars more,' said a man standing in front, who bore a very strong resemblance to what the Peter Funks call a 'Dummy.' 'He is a good barber, good hotel waiter, and can work in the field, or do anything. He is worth a fortune to any man: he can be taken around and exhibited at the south—turned to advantage in that way; or he would be invaluable to a slave-dealer who has other slaves to sell, by advertising that Henry Long is at his place.' (This is the game that was played to-day. The crowd was kept together at the other sales, by putting off the sale of Long until all the others were disposed of.) 'Seven hundred and fifty dollars I have bid, will nobody say more?' After dwelling and repeating the usual slang-whang of the auctioneer, occupying, altogether, not five minutes, Long was knocked off to David Clopton, of Georgia—a slave-dealer of that state, where there is not a verdant field—not a yard square of green grass. The auctioneer himself was empowered to make the purchase, and, immediately after knocking off the bid, he gave assurance that Long should now be taken care of, when the audience gave a vociferous round of applause, leaving the room exultingly, one man crying out 'damn the North.'"

CASE OF WILLIAM HARRIS.

A slave named William Harris, and his wife and child, succeeded, a few weeks since, in escaping from their master, in South Carolina. At Philadelphia they came under the notice of the friends of the fugitive, who aided them northward. At Albany some friends paid their passage to Rochester, where

they were to cross the lake to Canada. The crew of the boat on which they were, learned that they were fugitives, and immediately devised a plan to trouble and terrify them, probably thereby finding amusement. At night, some of the human fiends, in prosecution of their plans, went to the berth of the man Harris, and awakening him, informed him that his master was on board the boat, and that they would surrender him and his family into his hands. Harris drew a dirk, with which he was armed for self-defence, drove the scoundrels on deck, and by his decisive manner and actions kept them at bay till morning. In the morning he was informed that his master had left the boat and gone on to Syracuse, but would there meet him on the arrival of the boat. The boat came to a stopping-place at the first Lodi Lock, about a mile east of the city. As is often the case, a number of persons went aboard the boat. Harris supposed they came to take him, being so informed by some of the crew. In his desperation, he seized his razor, and drawing it forcibly across his throat, jumped into the canal. His wife, with their child in her arms, leaped after him; all determined to die rather than again come under the slaveholder's power. Efforts were then made to rescue the drowning family. Harris and his wife were got out, but the child was drowned. We are, however, happy to state that Harris and his wife are now in good hands, that they will be suitably cared for, and as soon as possible put beyond the danger of the slave-catcher's grasp.

Murder was also committed in the following case :—On November 24, 1851, in the United States Circuit Court, at Philadelphia, Castner Hanaway was tried for alleged treason, arising from the disturbances which took place at a place called Christiana, in Lancaster County, during the progress of which a man named Gorsuch was killed, and his nephew wounded. The statement of a witness named Kline shows the scenes rendered common in America by the Fugitive Slave Act. The witness said—"These are the warrants placed in my hands on the 9th of September last. I went to execute these warrants. Several persons were to meet me at Penningtonville. These were Mr. Gorsuch, and his son and nephew. About a mile from Christiana we met the guide. Old Mr. Gorsuch and the guide walked ahead. We went about a mile, and then stopped. Mr.

Gorsuch proposed to divide the party. I objected, and said we wanted all, and more too. The guide then took us back through a corn field. We went on to a creek, where we sat down and ate something. I told them we had better not stop, as it was near daylight. We then went on; I was a little ahead until we came near Parker's house. When we got within forty yards of the house I saw a black man. The moment he saw us he took to his heels, and I after him. This was Nelson or Josh, I should say. A couple of bars were across the lane; I fell over them; this was in the short lane to the house; as near as I can tell, about fifteen or twenty yards from the long lane. I ran up to the house; Nelson got in before me; old Mr. Gorsuch and another got up a little before me. I went into the house, and called up stairs for the landlord; I told them who I was. I told them, and said I was an officer, and had warrants for Nelson and Josh. They called out there were no such persons there. They then pushed a sharp instrument down stairs at me. I then went out and told old Mr. Gorsuch he had better talk to them through the window. One of the blacks then fired, and I fired my revolver. I took out a piece of paper as if to write to the sheriff for a hundred men. I did this to intimidate them. I read my warrant three times—once in the house, and twice out. I remonstrated with the men; spoke to Parker, the landlord, a coloured man. Mr. Hanaway then came up to the bars, and Mr. Gorsuch told me to ask him to help us. I did so. I showed him my warrants. I asked him his name; he replied it was none of my business. I asked him if he lived in the neighbourhood, and he made the same reply. I told him I had come to arrest Nelson and Josh. He said he would not assist me; that the blacks had a right to defend themselves. I asked him if he would speak to them, and keep them off. He said, no; he would not interfere. There were a number of blacks in and around the house then, with guns, and were loading them. The negroes were armed with guns, scythes, &c. A few only were without something. Harvey Scott had nothing in his hands. Some fifteen or twenty negroes came up in the same direction and across the fields, after Mr. Hanaway. One came up immediately after he did, with a scythe in one hand and a revolver in the other. A man named Elijah Lewis came up shortly after Hanaway, in his shirt-sleeves. I showed him my warrant.

He read it, handed it to Hanaway, who read it again, and handed it to me. Lewis said the blacks had a right to defend themselves, and I had better go away, as blood would be spilt. I saw that a good many blacks were coming up, and I began to beg. I asked them to prevent the blacks from firing, and I would withdraw my men, but hold them responsible for the slaves. I followed Hanaway and Lewis up several yards, and begged them, for God's sake, not to let the blacks fire, I would withdraw my men."

Some years since, a slaveholder held a mulatto woman as a slave, who was his own daughter. Familiarity with the system had not obliterated all traces of human feeling in his bosom, and he desired that his daughter should be made free. Years passed on, and she became a wife after the slave-law mode, and the mother of children. For the purpose of attaining his cherished object, the mother and children were sent into Ohio, where, of course, they became free by Ohio law, as having been sent there for the purpose by the master. One of these children, a daughter, was at the time but eighteen months old. The slaveholder died; and his wife, as was stated in the settlement of the estate, paid 1300 dollars as a compensation to the heirs for those slaves who had been sent away. This woman also died, and no legal evidence of the transaction remained. The children of the woman sent into Ohio grew up to womanhood, and were married. The little girl, only eighteen months old when she came to Ohio, has been a resident in Cincinnati for fifteen years, living as unsuspecting of danger as any woman of our city. She is nearly white, it requiring a practised eye to detect her colour; is the mother of two children; and she with her family were pleasantly situated, with the comforts and conveniences of life around them. A few days since a message from a distant spot was sent to them in breathless haste, that the heirs of the father of this woman's mother had made a claim to all the children of the woman sent into Ohio so many years ago, and it was supposed a warrant was already in the city for the seizure of the woman and her children here, while the other branches of the family had just been hurried away for the North. Consternation seized this household. True, the woman was legally free, but once in the grasp of the slaveholder, she knew that nothing could save her. Not a

moment was to be lost. The officers were probably already on her track. As the only resource, she, with her babes, were hurried instantly from their home, and with such comforts as could be hurriedly gathered, she bade her husband farewell (who could not at the time accompany her), left her pleasant home to desolation, and fled to Canada, where, thanks to the great Protector of the oppressed, and to the humane policy of the British Government, she is safe.

The scenes of bloodshed, in consequence of the attempt to carry out the Fugitive Slave Law, are of the most distressing character. The following extracts from the *Wytheville Republican* corroborates this, though the writer evidently thinks that slaves ought to remain slaves, and that the abolitionists are the most dangerous of men. The writer says:—

"Four negro men, the property of John Rives and David Cox, two citizens of that county, seduced by the advice of that notorious and infamous abolition emissary, Bacon, who has been prowling about through that county, and Russel in this State, and in Ashe and other counties in North Carolina, on the Virginia border, ran away from their masters, intending, no doubt, to make for Ohio, or some other lawless and forsworn State of the confederacy, there to be harboured and worked, and worked and harboured, as occasion might allow or require. They took the course of New River, intending, it is believed, to pursue that river to its mouth, there to meet the colleagues, hypocrites, and villains, of Bacon, Crooks, and M'Bride. It turned out, however, that as they travelled, and while yet in Grayson County, eight or ten miles from the Wythe line, they were fallen in with by five or six white men of Grayson, who undertook to stop and arrest them. The negroes were armed with knives, spears, and with one or two weapons made of broken English scythes. The white men had one or two guns.

"We are not prepared to give the particulars of the combat. The negroes assailed the whites, and the scythes were used with terrible effect. Samuel Bartlett was struck in the forehead and his head split open, cutting into the brain an inch or two the whole length of the head. He lived about eight hours. Alfred Bartlett, his brother, who had a gun, and who fired it foolishly, merely to wound, in attempting to relieve his brother, had his left wrist and hand badly cut, almost severed from the

arm. Yet, after this he knocked two of the negroes down, and left them for dead. One of the negroes thus knocked down, had stabbed a Mr. Wilcox, whom he had under him on the ground, through the neck, and was in the act of inflicting a more deadly wound, when thus prevented by the wounded Bartlett. Mr. John Clemmonts was struck by one of the negroes, who used a scythe, across the head, and his skull was cloven from temple to temple, the brain cut in upon the whole way from one to two inches, and yet there are hopes of his recovery. Mr. Wm. B. Hale was severely injured with rocks thrown by the negroes. Notwithstanding the terrible wounds inflicted upon the white men, two of the negroes were secured, the other two (both believed to be wounded with gun shots) made their escape, and so far as we know, are yet out, though hotly pursued. The two taken are in Grayson jail, and will be tried for their lives, for insurrection and murder."

In a former number, says the *Richmond Standard*, we gave an account of the last slave-hunt in Pennsylvania, when a man of the name of Phillips, who had for years been an industrious and respectable citizen of Harrisburg, in that State, was brutally knocked on the head, to render his capture certain, and then taken, in a state of insensibility, before Commissioner M'Allister, who mocked and insulted him with a sham trial, and delivered him over to his captors, as a slave for life. His case excited a deep feeling of indignation among the people of Harrisburg, from the manner of his capture, and the character of the pretended trial which was awarded him, and also moved their sympathies for his probable fate, and for the sudden desolation which had thus fallen on his wife. The man-stealer, regardless of the misery he creates, enters a happy family, drags away the father to a felon's jail, deprives the members of that family of their natural guardian and head, and all this is done in a land that boasts that all are free.

We read in an American paper, in the beginning of May, that the town of Columbia was thrown into an extreme excitement by the report that a cold-blooded murder had been committed. The particulars of the terrible tragedy are as follow: Deputy-Marshal Snyder, of Harrisburg, and police-officer Ridgely, from Baltimore, came to Columbia to arrest an alleged fugitive slave, by the name of William Smith, who was

engaged in piling lumber at Mr. Gotleib Sener's yard. The first witness, who testified before the coroner's jury, says, that he was standing on the steps at Parson's Hotel, when Ridgely called him out, and stated to him that they were going to take a slave, and wanted him to go with them and assist. He accompanied them, and saw Snyder touch William Smith on the shoulder. The witness then ran away immediately to some distance. In a very short time he heard the report of a pistol. Snyder and Ridgely, a moment afterward, made their appearance, the former very much frightened, and exclaiming that "Ridgely had shot the man." Another witness testifies that he saw Snyder and Ridgely have hold of the coloured man—Snyder of the left, and Ridgely the right shoulder. The deceased was pulling away, when Ridgely placed a pistol against his neck and fired. Poor Smith fell dead instantly. There was no effort made to rescue William Smith, though he was within one hundred feet of at least a dozen coloured men, who were at work in the lumber-yard. The perpetrator of the murder was allowed to escape. In America the slave may be murdered with impunity under the sanction of law.

Another illustration of the law, and of the demoralization of American society is from a New York paper:—"A few weeks since, a southern gentleman arrived in the city, and made known to a confidential friend that he had come in pursuit of a runaway slave, his own property; and from the fact of the slave being a beautiful young woman, and nearly white, he thought it advisable not to attempt to recover her by making application in any quarter where the fact of his pursuit would be likely to be made known to the public, as his object might thereby be frustrated. His friend advised him, therefore, to offer a reward of two thousand dollars to some intelligent police-officer, for the arrest of the fugitive, and trust to his prudence and discretion. The advice was taken, and after a while a clue was got to the whereabouts of the beautiful fugitive; but before she could be arrested, she was 'up and gone, the graceless girl,' and away down east, where the sun rises, and beyond the reach of her legal proprietor. There was nothing unusual or marvellous in all this, but it was discovered, during the time that the search for the fugitive was being made, that the 'fair she' was not only the legal property of the pursuer, but his

natural property also; she was, in fact, his own daughter, and had escaped from the man to whom her father and owner had hired her. Since her arrival in this city she had captivated the heart of a white gentleman, who did not suspect her origin, and been 'woo'd and wedded, and a';' and her husband, having by some means or other, got scent of the danger, instead of playing the part of *Inkle* to his *Yarico*, had the manliness to bear her off to a place of safety."

The following incident is related by the Washington correspondent of the *Ashtabula Sentinel:*—Yesterday, a servant woman came to my room, saying a coloured woman wished to speak with me. I told her to show her up. She soon returned with her. She was sobbing, and evidently in great agony of mind. I asked the cause of her grief. It was sometime before she could so far compose her mind as to relate to me her misfortune; which consisted in living under the barbarous laws enacted by Congress for the government of this district. She said her husband had just been sold to a slave-dealer, and taken to the barracoons of Alexandria; that his purchaser was intending to take him to Alabama in two or three days; that she had four children at home. At this point she burst out into a loud expression of her grief. Her sobbings were interrupted occasionally with exclamations of "O God! O, my dear children! O, my husband!" Then appealing to me, "O, master, for God's sake, do try to get back the father of my babes." I learned that her husband's name is George Tooman. His former owner is a female, named Martha Johnwood, living east of the Capitol some half a mile. George went to work this morning in the barn, at husking corn, without any suspicion of the fate which awaited him. The slave-dealer and an assistant came to the barn, seized him, placed handcuffs upon him, and hurried him off to the slave-pen in Alexandria. The woman hearing of it, followed him there on foot, and returned, and then sought me, in the vain hope that I should be able to assist her. The day is said by many to be the coldest known here for years; yet she has been exposed to the keen piercing winds, although I think she was thinly clad. She had not seen her children since morning, when she left them without firewood. I endeavoured to soothe her feelings by expressing some faint hope that her husband might yet be redeemed—that I would

make inquiry, and ascertain if I could find some one who would re-purchase him, and permit him to remain in the district. It was dark when she left my room to return to her home, rendered bitter by the fate of the husband and father. The cold winds rocked the building, and howled mournfully about the corners. I reflected upon the barbarous law by which Congress had authorized and encouraged such crimes, and inflicted such misery upon the down-trodden of God's poor. I trembled for my country, when I reflected that God was just, and that his justice will not sleep for ever. I asked myself the question, Will Heaven permit such wickedness, such barbarous cruelty, to go unpunished? Yet Mr. Fillmore, in his message, advises Congress to abide by the compromise as a final settlement of the slave question, and leave the coloured women who are wives and mothers in this district to the operations of this savage law—would leave fathers here to be sold in the manner above related—leave children here to be robbed of their parents. And the Whig caucus resolve substantially that they will lend their aid to sustain this law, which would disgrace the tyrant of Austria, and would add a deeper infamy to Haynau, the butcher of the Hungarians.

These cases are sufficient to show the abominable nature of the law, which has made American legislation a reproach and a shame. In a speech recently delivered in the senate of the United States, the Hon. Charles Sumner, of Massachusetts, stated, "That the slavemasters, few in number, amounting to about 300,000, according to the recent census, have succeeded in dictating the policy of the national government, and have written slavery on its front. And now an arrogant and unrelenting ostracism is applied, not only to all who express themselves against slavery, but to every man who is unwilling to be the menial of slavery. A novel test for office is introduced, which would have excluded all the fathers of the Republic—even Washington, Jefferson, Franklin. Yes, Sir. Startling it may be, but indisputable. Could these revered demi-gods of history once again descend upon the earth and mingle in our affairs—not one of them could receive a nomination from the National Convention of either of the two old political parties. Out of the convictions of their hearts and the utterances of their lips against slavery they would be condemned. This single fact

reveals the extent to which the national government has departed from its true course, and its great examples. For myself, I know no better aim under the constitution, than to bring the government back to the precise position on this question which it occupied on the auspicious morning of its first organization under Washington—

'Cursus iterare relictos.'

That the sentiments of the fathers may again prevail with our rulers, and that the national flag may nowhere shelter slavery!" So powerful has been the effect of the speech, that it has created an echo even on this side the Atlantic. That graceful and eloquent advocate of the slave, the Earl of Carlisle, has written with reference to it :—

"In our past hours of friendly intercourse, in our frequent walks by the sparkling estuary of Boston, or upon the sunny brow of Bunker's Hill, how little did I, how little did he, I feel well assured, dream of such an opening upon his quiet and unostentatious career! and now, while I have been writing these lines, I have received the speech he has lately delivered in Congress on the bearings of the Fugitive Slave Law, which, by the closeness of its logic, and the masculine vigour of its eloquence, proves to me how all the perfections of his mind have grown up to, and been dilated with, the inspiration of the cause which he has now made his own. Indeed, when I rise from reading such a speech as his, or such a book as this to which I have now ventured to prefix this hurried prelude, I feel constrained at once to temper and to dignify my own sentiments by clothing them with appropriate accents borrowed from our own drama—

'Reward them for the noble deed, just Heavens!
For this one action, guard them and distinguish them
With signal mercies and with great deliverance;
Guard them from wrong, adversity, and shame.
The poor, forsaken ones!
Shall they be left a prey to savage power?
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
Or cry to Heaven for help, and not be heard?
Go on! pursue, assert the sacred cause;
Stand forth, ye proxies of all-ruling Providence,
And save the friendless captives from oppression.
Saints shall assist ye with prevailing prayers,
And warring angels combat on your side.'"

Another protest against the law has also reached us. It is the speech of Charles Durkee, in the House of Representatives, August 6, 1852. Mr. Durkee described the bill in the following striking terms. He said—"History proves that the most galling oppression the people have ever suffered has been inflicted by cruel and tyrannical governments under the name and forms of law. But in the long catalogue of public crimes among civilised nations, there is none more cruel and barbarous than the Fugitive Slave Law now in force in the United States. This law was called by its friends a healing and peaceful measure; yet time has proved it, what every candid mind knew it to be at the time of its passage, a *war* measure, in some instances even more cruel in its operation than the guillotine itself. Jefferson says, 'by the law of nature, man is at peace with man until some aggression is committed.' Here aggression exists in savage form. This law, in its operation, disregards every principle of justice, and tramples under foot the very objects for which government was instituted. The tendency of the Federal Government to consolidation and oppression was apprehended by our revolutionary fathers, and so great was their opposition to the Constitution, that it could only be overcome by the strongest assurances that the amendments now incorporated in that instrument should be immediately thereafter adopted. These amendments were designed as additional checks against an unlawful exercise of Federal power. But alas, how futile are paper constitutions, in the day of profligacy and usurpation! Who could have imagined, four years ago, that this great Republic, boasting of its intelligence and of its sentiments of equality, would be now engaged in performing the drudgery of slave-traders—kidnapping men, women, and children, for a slave-market! Who would have believed this government could ever be capable of waging a piratical war against an innocent, unoffending people, for the sole purpose of enriching the pockets of those who manufacture, and those who use, thumb-screws, chains, and fetters, and construct prisons in the maintenance of this horrid traffic? Good Heavens! can it be possible that the government established by Washington, Jefferson, and their compatriots, has engaged, in the middle of the nineteenth century, in what our own statute-book declares, in certain latitudes,

piracy! Strange as it may seem, it is true. It remains to be seen how far the people are bound by the claims of party slavery to sustain and continue this unrelenting war against the African race."

Mr. Charles Durkee proceeds to say—and we would fain hope that he expresses the truth—"I do not believe that the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 is approved of by the country generally. No, Sir. If it were submitted to-day, directly to the people, I have no doubt that it would receive the condemnation of *three-fourths* of the popular vote. It is the measure, alone, of a few strong partisan politicians, exceedingly ambitious of public notoriety and political power, who make politics a trade, and claim the control of Whig and Democratic organizations as a 'patent right' during life. It was enacted by influences not very complimentary to Congress or to the country. I need only to refer to the fact that Daniel Webster and Mr. Fillmore abandoned the ground they had previously occupied on the slave question, and gave their influence for this measure. Several members of the House of Representatives, elected by free soil votes, and who were supposed to be true to liberty, were also persuaded to abandon the cause of freedom in New Mexico and Utah, and subject that immense tract of country to the control of slavery. These recreant Representatives, now holding office in the government (in my candid opinion, as a reward of their treachery), contributed largely to bring about this humiliating and disgraceful state of things. But, though the minority has triumphed over the majority, as usual, through the treachery of Northern Representatives, thus widening the sphere of slavery, yet I look upon it only as an incident in a war still waging in behalf of the poor and oppressed; a war that must, sooner or later, bring triumph to freedom. I say it is but an *incident*. Our enemies, in 1812, gained a like temporary victory when they took possession of this city, and burned the public buildings. But their triumph was of short duration; and so, in my opinion, it will be with this high-handed piracy, now, under the name of law, engrafted on our statute-books. True, there is a dissimilarity in the manner of conducting these two wars, but a striking parallel in their origin and character."

We shall conclude these facts and observations with

THE CASE OF HORACE PRESTON.

The particulars from the *New York Tribune*.—A black man, named Horace Preston, residing in Williamsburgh, and earning an honest living by his own work, married to a woman most devotedly attached to him, was arrested the other day by a member of our Sixth Ward Police, named James Martin. The arrest was made on an utterly frivolous pretext; it was charged that he had committed a larceny; that the witnesses against him would be forthcoming; and accordingly he was incarcerated until they might be produced. But that nothing might occur to render imperfect this illustration of American equality before the law, and American respect for personal rights, he was hustled into the lock-up of the Sixth Ward Station in the lower part of the Tombs, not under the control of the regular warden of that prison, and kept there in a manner which might not disgrace the justice of Persia or Tartary, but is a foul blot on New York. The offence charged was a bailable one; ample bail was offered, but it was refused. The worst of criminals—a pirate, a murderer, a violator of helpless woman—is allowed to see counsel and prepare for his defence. A legal gentleman of the highest respectability having, after long search, discovered the place of this man's sequestration, went there and demanded to see him as counsel, but was turned away from the door, and was not even allowed to see the warrant upon which he was immured. The active agents in this business were a lawyer and a policeman, who had tracked out the fugitive, and informed his *owner*, Mr. Rees, of Baltimore.

It appears that after the preliminary steps above noted had taken place, the claimant's son arrived, when the following infamous proceedings were gone through:—Preston was kept locked up in the Sixth Ward, as he says, till twelve or one o'clock *at night* (*mark the hour!*), then taken out and conducted to the Second Ward Station-house. There he was held till the claimant's son arrived, when, it appears, he, together with Busteed and Martin, held a consultation at the Second Ward Station-house. Preston's wife, his counsel, and several of his friends, had been untiring in their pursuit of, and inquiry for him, but could learn nothing whatever, until a man halloed to the wife in the Park that they had just taken her husband into

the U. S. Court-room. Preston's counsel and wife hurried with all speed to the Court-room, but, on arriving, found a witness sworn and giving evidence. At this stage our reporter has taken up the case and kept our readers advised on the subject.

When the case was adjourned on Friday afternoon till Saturday morning, it was with the avowed understanding, on the part of Preston's counsel, and assented to by the Commissioner, that if the latter should deny the motion made and argued by Mr. Jay to quash or dismiss the proceedings, then the counsel should go into their defence on the merits. To that end, several witnesses were in attendance ; others had process out for them, to be served as soon as found. Some of these witnesses had known Preston in Baltimore, and were prepared to prove the declarations of his former mistress as to his freedom, and the provisions in her will to that effect. By others it was proposed to show the admission of the claimant, and others, to contradict Busteed's affidavit and prove a conspiracy.

The Commissioner, instead of deciding the preliminary motion of Mr. Jay, and then stopping, took the counsel, the prisoner, and the audience by surprise. He *decided the whole case*—had his certificate in his hand—delivered it over in the twinkling of an eye—gathered up his papers, and retreated towards the back-door of the room. Busteed hardly had time to kiss the Bible held out to him by the Commissioner. It was all in vain that Messrs. Jay, Emmet, and Culver jumped upon the floor, asking the Commissioner to hear them—urging their surprise, and the injustice done to their client. Their efforts were all fruitless. The Commissioner refused to hear anything further.

Thus, from freedom and industry, and all that made life dear, poor Preston was torn away, at the command of a ruthless judge. Had Preston been a white man, and committed some infamous crime—some crime that entailed ruin and disgrace on him in this life, he might have had bail. However, he was a black man. His crime was the atrocious one of attempting to be free—of dwelling where he might earn a living for himself and for another—where the toil of his hands, and the sweat of his brow, might benefit himself alone. For

this he was a criminal before American law, and was delivered over to the revenge of a man-stealer; his prayer for justice was unheard; equally vain were the tears and entreaties of an agonized and distracted wife, about to lose the husband she had sworn to live with till torn from her by the rude hand of death; the husband she was never more again to see. Such a scene must make the victim doubt in Providence. It must make him doubt whether this earth of ours be not altogether the devil's own—whether right be not crushed out by might; it must make him look to

> "————Heaven, with that frenzied air,
> As if to ask if a God were there."

A more touching exhibition of the working of the Fugitive Slave Law can hardly be witnessed, notwithstanding the many infamous cases with which that law has filled the land. The case of Preston was one of great hardship. The stroke fell not on himself alone. This man's wife stood by her husband for three days, with a devotion and tenderness unparalleled. Whenever permitted to sit near him, she had fast hold of his hand in both of her's, wringing herself in the most intense, half-suppressed agony. Near the time of the final separation, Busteed, the lawyer, to console her, gave her an orange, or peeled one for her. What a delicate attention! But we dare say even that was too humane a deed for some.

> COLUMBIA! shall thy honoured name,
> Be as a by-word through the world?
> Rouse! for as if to blast thy fame,
> This keen reproach is at thee hurled;
> The banner that above thee waves,
> Is floating o'er three million slaves.
>
> Arouse! and let each hill and glen
> With prayer to the high heavens ring out;
> Till all your land with freeborn men,
> May join in one triumphant shout,
> That freedom's banner does not wave
> Its folds above a single slave.

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